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Governor Lifts Recreational Ban on Big Sioux River

PIERRE, S.D. - As spring flood waters recede in South Dakota, so do the dangerous conditions on area waters.

Because of the diminished threat, Gov. Dennis Daugaard has lifted the ban on recreational use of the Big Sioux River in eastern South Dakota.

"I want to thank the outdoorsmen and women of South Dakota for their patience," the Governor said. "Boating, fishing and water recreation are popular with many South Dakotans, but the concern for public safety always takes precedence in these situations".

Even though the ban has been lifted, Department of Game, Fish and Parks officials are asking people recreating on the Big Sioux to remain cautious.

"We ask those who will be using the river for recreation to watch for logs and other debris," said GFP Regional Supervisor Doug Alvine. "There are culverts and a spillway that kayakers and canoeists should avoid in Codington County near 457th Avenue (south of Walmart in Watertown)."

Boaters are advised to take special care near dams in rivers and streams. High water flowing over those structures create hydraulics that can trap boaters immediately below the dams, and escape may be virtually impossible.

High water levels persist on most bodies of water across South Dakota, and outdoor enthusiasts are asked to remain cautious wherever they are boating.

A 300-foot "no wake" zone is in effect on both Lake Poinsett and Blue Dog Lake. Boaters within 300 feet of the shoreline anywhere on these two lakes must operate their boats at a slow enough speed – about 5 miles per hour – to not create any wakes.